DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 164 290 SE 025 436

AUTHOR Weiss, Iris R.; And Others
TITLE The Visiting Women Scientists Pilot Program 1978: Highlights Report.
INSTITUTION Research Triangle Inst., Durham, N.C. Center for Educational Research and Evaluation.
SPONS AGENCY National Science Foundation, Washington, D.C.
REPORT NO RTI-1481-00-02-F
PUB DATE Aug 78
CONTRACT SPI-77-21-262
NOTE 17p.; For related document, see SE 025 437

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.83 HC-$1.67 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Career Education; *Females; Feminism; Higher Education; *Science Careers; Science Education; *Scientists; Womens Education; *Working Women

ABSTRACT

This publication describes a pilot program which involved 40 women scientists and consisted of visits to 110 high schools in the United States. Each visit involved some of the following activities: (1) a large group meeting of tenth-grade female students; (2) seminars for approximately 30 female students; (3) meetings with individual classes; (4) meetings with school personnel; (5) informal chats with students; and (6) an informal meeting with the school principal or contact person. This document presents an overview of the program, and describes the selection of the high schools to be visited, the selection of the women scientists, the conduction of the meetings, and the evaluation of the program. (BB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

RESEARCH TRIANGLE INSTITUTE

Center for Educational Research and Evaluation

RTI/1481/00-02F

August 1978

ED164290

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Junius A. Davis

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC) AND USERS OF THE ERIC SYSTEM."

The Visiting Women Scientists Pilot Program

1978

Highlights Report

Iris R. Weiss, Carol Place, and Larry E. Conaway

Research Triangle Institute, Research Triangle Park, N.C.

The material in this report is based upon work supported by the National Science Foundation under Contract No. SPI-77-21-262. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the National Science Foundation.

SE 025 436

RESEARCH TRIANGLE PARK, NORTH CAROLINA 27709

The Visiting Women Scientists Pilot Program

I. OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM

In 1977 the National Science Foundation awarded a contract to the Center for Educational Research and Evaluation of the Research Triangle Institute (RTI) in North Carolina for the design and implementation of a Visiting Women Scientists Program to motivate female high school students to consider and pursue careers in science and technology.

The design phase included the development of (1) a roster of women scientists, (2) a logistical plan for scheduling and conducting visits, (3) materials to be used in the program and (4) plans for evaluating the program. Feedback from a five-member Advisory Panel[1] was used to revise the plans for the pilot program, and the forms and procedures to be used were approved by the Federal Office of Management and Budget. A complete description of the planning activities can be found in the Phase I Final Report.[2]

The objectives established for the Visiting Women Scientists Program were:

1. To provide an opportunity for high school students to meet and interact with women scientists role models.

2. To provide examples of women in a variety of science careers.

3. To provide evidence of women who have combined personal lives and successful careers in a variety of ways.

4. To provide information about the importance of science and scientists in solving world problems.

5. To provide information about science and technology job opportunities for women in the future (including emerging careers), and equal opportunity laws and affirmative action programs which guarantee women access to these opportunities.

6. To provide information about the preparation needed for various science careers, the importance of keeping various options open, and the sources of financial aid which are available for obtaining this preparation.

---

[1]The members of the Advisory Panel were Ms. Despina Boinaderis, Dr. Alma Lantz, Dr. Carolyn MacDonald, Ms. Diane Payne, and Ms. Edith Ruina.

[2]"The Development of a Visiting Women Scientists Program for Secondary Schools: Phase I Final Report." National Science Foundation, Washington, D.C., October 1977.

7. To encourage teachers and counselors to provide support and encouragement to women who are considering science careers.

8. To promote the attitude among both males and females that science careers are appropriate for women as well as men.

9. To encourage high school females to seek additional information about women in science careers, and to provide help in obtaining such information.

The pilot program consisted of visits to 110 high schools across the United States; with a few exceptions each school was visited by both a woman scientist and an RTI field representative. The field representative was responsible for working out the schedule for the day's activities with the school, for preparing the woman scientist for the visit, and for assisting in the conduct of the visit.

Principals in a national sample of high schools were asked about their schools' interest in participating in the program; those that expressed interest were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups. In addition to the visit, the experimental schools received a film to be shown before the visit; and both experimental and control schools received a resource packet of science career information. Students in both groups were given the opportunity to request additional information by returning a postage-paid postcard.

Typically, a circuit of 3 or 4 schools in a geographic area was visited by an RTI field representative and a woman scientist from the area within a 4 or 5 day period. Half of the circuits were randomly assigned to receive visits from women scientists chosen from the roster developed for this program; the remaining circuits were to receive visits from women scientists who were "handpicked" based on recommendations. A total of 40 women scientists were involved in the pilot program visits.

Each visit consisted of some combination of the following activities:

1. a large group meeting usually consisting of tenth grade female students (up to 150 students);

2. one or more seminars for female students who were particularly interested in exploring science career opportunities; these seminars were generally limited to 30 students each;

3, meetings with individual classes (which usually included both female and male students);

4. a meeting with school personnel including counselors, librarians, and representatives of the science, mathematics and social science departments;

5. a time when the woman scientist and field representative would be available to chat with interested students on an informal basis; and

6. an informal meeting with the principal and/or contact person.

Evaluation of the program was based on data provided by students, school contact persons, women scientists, and field representatives. In addition, RTI central staff members observed a number of the visits. Although there were a few problems in the pilot program, student reactions to the visits were quite favorable, and both women scientists and school contact persons responded overwhelmingly in favor of future participation in the program. In addition, comparisons between experimental and control groups showed that the program was effective in encouraging female students to seek additional information about science careers.

This report presents highlights of the Visiting Women Scientists Program. The selection of high schools to be visited is described in Section II, while Section III describes the procedures used in selecting the women scientists. The program's operations are described in Section IV, and Section V presents the evaluation results. A more detailed treatment of the procedures and results of the pilot program can be found in the Phase II technical report.[3]

II. SELECTION OF HIGH SCHOOLS TO BE VISITED

The design of the pilot Visiting Women Scientists Program included contacting a national probability sample of 324 high schools. Prior to contacting the schools, RTI submitted the plans for the program to the Council of Chief State School Officers' Committee on Evaluation and Information Systems (CEIS), to the Chief State School Officer in each state with sample schools, and to the Federal Office of Management and Budget. Following receipt of approval from these groups, a letter was sent to each of the 324 high schools, along

---

[3]"The Visiting Women Scientists Pilot Program, 1978." (Final Report) National Science Foundation, Washington, D.C., August 1978.

with a brochure describing the Visiting Women Scientists Program and a form to use in indicating if the school wished to participate in the program. In each case the district superintendent was informed that the school was being contacted.

A total of 134 of the 324 schools indicated that they would like to participate in the pilot program. Based on the response from this national sample, it was estimated that approximately 39 percent of the high schools in the nation would wish to participate in the Visiting Women Scientists Program if given the opportunity using contact procedures similar to those used in the pilot program.

Interested schools were grouped geographically into 30 clusters of from 2 to 6 schools each, and schools within each cluster were randomly assigned to experimental and control groups. The experimental schools in each cluster constituted a circuit to be visited by a woman scientist and an RTI field representative during a single week. Since many of these circuits contained fewer than 4 schools, additional schools were contacted about participating in the program. These "extra" schools were chosen either because of geographic proximity to experimental schools or because they had contacted RTI and expressed interest in participating.

A total of 129 schools (86 experimental and 43 "extra") were scheduled for visits. Since the circuit approach necessitated scheduling as many as 4 visits in a geographic area in a single week, it was not possible to allow the schools to select the dates of their visits. While care was taken to avoid scheduling visits during vacation times or other dates the schools were not in session, approximately one-fourth of the schools experienced some difficulty with the scheduled date. The most common scheduling problems were: schools closed due to snow, the visit date was too close to a vacation; and the visit date conflicted with other school activities such as competency testing. Seventy-four percent of the visits took place on the scheduled dates, 11 percent occurred on rescheduled dates, and 15 percent were cancelled either at the school's request or because rescheduling was not possible.

As was intended, the 110 schools which were visited were a good cross section of the high schools across the United States. Included in the 110 schools were 97 public schools, 10 Catholic schools, and 3 independent private schools. All 4 census regions of the country were represented, as were rural, small city, urban and suburban areas. The visited schools ranged in size from

less than 100 to more than 4,000 students enrolled in grades 10 through 12. The visited schools also varied in their racial composition, with 15 of the schools having predominantly black or Hispanic enrollments.

III. SELECTION OF WOMEN SCIENTISTS

A roster of women scientists interested in participating in the Visiting Women Scientists Program was developed by mailing application forms and information to a variety of women scientists whose names were obtained in several ways:

(1) samples from available rosters of women in professional science organizations such as the American Astronomical Society and the American Statistical Association;

(2) recommendations by people in various disciplines and organizations such as the American Chemical Society's Women Chemists Committee;

(3) responses either by phone or letter to announcements of the program placed in various newsletters, such as The NSF Bulletin and The Association for Women in Science Newsletter;

(4) portrayals of women scientists in various articles, pamphlets, etc., such as "Space for Women" and "I'm Madly in Love With Electricity;"

(5) registration lists of the national convention of the Society of Women Engineers and the Engineering Foundation; and

(6) miscellaneous requests for information and application forms from women scientists who did not mention their source of introduction to the program.

Approximately 1,200 application forms were mailed to women scientists during September and October 1977; the roster consisted of those women scientists who returned completed application forms to RTI. To ensure that the group of visitors would include women with a variety of educational and occupational experiences as well as differing personal characteristics, the application form requested information about area of science, degrees obtained, employment status, job activities, marital status, and race. In addition, respondents were asked to indicate the types of information they believed should be conveyed to high school students during the Visiting Women Scientists Program.

For cost reasons, geographic location was a prime consideration in selecting women scientists to conduct the visits in each circuit. In selecting women scientists, priority was given to those who had indicated they would be able to visit 3 to 5 schools on consecutive days. Responses to the question about information to be conveyed to students were used to screen out those women scientists who appeared bitter about the treatment of women or who appeared to advocate a single lifestyle as the answer for all women.

The Advisory Panel used projections of employment opportunities to recommend the following mix for the visiting women scientists: approximately 60 percent of the visitors should be women scientists employed in industry; no more than 15 percent should be biologists; and no more than 15 percent should be social scientists. However, the composition of the roster along with geographic and scheduling constraints made it difficult to meet these criteria.

The 40 women scientists who participated in the pilot program included 13 engineers, 12 physical scientists, 6 biological scientists, 5 mathematicians, and 4 social scientists. Sixteen of the visiting women scientists were employed in profit-making organizations, 14 held academic positions, 8 worked in government and 2 were employed by non-profit organizations. Thirty-three of the visitors were Caucasian, 5 were Black, and 2 were Mexican-American. Eighteen of the 40 women scientists had obtained their doctoral degrees, 12 had master's as their highest degree, and 10 had not gone beyond the bachelor's. Based on the assumption that the year of award of a bachelor's degree is a reasonable measure of age, a good balance across a span of ages was represented, with 6 visitors having received their earliest degree before 1955 (1 as early as 1936) and 8 since 1974.

The major problem in scheduling women scientists for visits was finding women scientists who would make a commitment to visit an entire circuit of schools in one week. Although the majority of the applicants had indicated a willingness to visit schools on consecutive days, a number of the women scientists who were contacted about participating in the pilot program could do so only during a specific period of time, such as spring break. As a result, 8 circuits had to be "split," i.e., two women scientists each visited different schools within the circuit.

IV. DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAM OPERATIONS

The Visiting Women Scientists Program included as an essential part of its operations the role of field representative. When the pilot Visiting Women Scientists Program was being designed, it was anticipated that the field representative would act as a local liaison, arranging the details of visits with the school contact persons and ensuring that each woman scientist would be sufficiently prepared for her visits. The field representative was to reduce the burden on participating schools and women scientists and help avoid logistical problems. Four field representatives, each of whom had a degree in a science field, were employed on a full-time basis during the four months of the visits. The field representatives were trained for the visits in a week-long session at RTI.

After the visit date was scheduled by the RTI central staff, the field representatives worked with the designated school contact persons by telephone in arranging the specific activities to be conducted during the daylong visit, choosing from a list of activities which had been described in RTI correspondence with the contact person. Also, after RTI central staff made initial contacts with women scientists and sent them materials describing the program and their general role, the field representatives were responsible for informing the women scientists of the detailed schedule of activities in each of their schools, and for discussing their specific roles and presentations in the schools. During the school visits, the field representatives assisted in conducting many of the activities and worked with the school contact person to resolve any problems that occurred.

Approximately one week before the date of the visit, the school contact person received a film entitled "The Women's Prejudice Film." The school was asked to show this film to all female students who would be involved in the Visiting Women Scientists Program. The film and an accompanying brochure which had been developed by RTI were primarily awareness materials for tenth grade female students and other female students who had not previously given much thought to the possibility of entering non-traditional careers, including those in science and engineering. The film was shown to more than 20,000 students in 83 schools; the remaining 27 schools either did not show the film at all or had not done so by the time of the visit. Each school also received a resource packet of materials describing career opportunities in the biological,

physical and social sciences, as well as those in engineering and mathematics. The contact person was requested to place the resource packet in the guidance office or some other place where it would be accessible to students.

The various types of activities which were generally included in the visit schedule established by the field representative and the school contact person are discussed below.

1. Large group meetings for female students. Schools were asked to arrange a large group meeting of tenth grade female students, and about half of the schools arranged such a meeting. Large schools sometimes selected a portion of the tenth grade females for the meeting, or they arranged two or more separate meetings for these students. Some schools also included students from grades 11 and 12 in large group meetings.

Tenth grade females were a major target of the program because they could be made aware of the potential for women in science and engineering careers at a time when they could still redirect their high school program to include more mathematics and science. The general approach towards the tenth grade females in the large group meetings was to provide them with an opportunity to meet a woman scientist role model and to raise their consciousness level.

The field representative typically introduced herself and the woman scientist, then presented a brief overview of the program's purposes and some of the issues associated with women in science. The field representative usually finished her presentation in about 15 minutes and then introduced the visiting woman scientist, who used another 15-20 minutes for her presentation. There was a great deal of variation in these presentations depending upon the activities and personalities of the particular woman scientist. Many of the women scientists prepared demonstrations related to their jobs: One woman scientist brought an actual cross section of a cylinder head from an aircraft engine in order to describe her research on fuel injectors to the students; an engineer assembled a miniature water treatment system from test tubes and demonstrated how the system removed hardness (calcium and magnesium) from water using sodium zeolite resins; a third woman scientist, a geophysicist in the petroleum industry, brought along several specimens to explain the tools of a geophysicist and show what oil and gas really look like in their natural states.

Some women scientists brought slides or pictures related to jobs, including state population and migration patterns, cultural anthropologists at work, and physiological slides of different animals; others showed slides of themselves at home with their families and friends, or enjoying their leisure moments in recreational activities.

In addition, the women scientists talked to the students about their education, training and personal backgrounds. Many related how they happened to choose a scientific career; some had aspired to such careers from an early age while others seemingly stumbled into them or made later career decisions. Some talked about the problems associated with combining a career in science and technology with a full family life and the ways in which they resolved these problems.

After the woman scientist had completed her presentation, the field representative usually took the lead again to conduct a question and answer session (as time and the large group atmosphere allowed), tell the students about the career materials being left at the school, and hand out the postcards which the students could use to obtain more information about women in science careers.

2. Seminars with approximately 20 female students. Schools were encouraged to schedule one or more seminars for approximately 20 females from grades eleven and twelve. Since juniors and seniors could not so easily redirect their high school programs to include more mathematics and science, schools were encouraged to invite or select female students who were particularly interested in a science career, or who were taking electives in math and science. The major purposes of these seminars were (a) to reinforce the notions that women can be interested and successful in science careers and that they can combine these careers with full private lives, and (b) to provide specific information in response to the students' questions.

The seminars varied a great deal in size, depending upon interest and facilities, and some schools involved sophomores, as well as juniors and seniors. Many schools limited participation to females taking elective math and science courses; some schools selected the students for the seminars, and others allowed the students to decide whether or not they wanted to attend.

The field representative generally stressed a few major points in each seminar: more women are entering the traditionally male fields of science and engineering; because of new attitudes and federal laws there are many opportuni-

ties for women in science; one does not have to be a genius to succeed in a career in science or engineering, but high school females should definitely take electives in science and math in order to have the option of entering these careers later.

If the woman scientist had prepared a demonstration or some type of slide presentation, she would often open her presentation with it and then add a discussion of the problems associated with combining a successful career and a personal life, using examples from her own situation or those of colleagues. Specific questions from the students were then answered by both the field representative and the woman scientist.

3. Meetings with science, mathematics and social science classes. Schools often arranged to have the visitors meet with classes which included both males and females. However, as the program progressed it became clear that many of the objectives of the program were best implemented when the activities were conducted with all-female groups. Because of their overall greater interest in science, male students often dominated discussions about science careers, and this may have reinforced the notion that science is a male's domain. In addition, the female students almost never raised questions concerning the problems associated with combining personal lives and successful careers when males were present. Therefore, field representatives increasingly encouraged schools to arrange all-female seminars rather than classroom visits.

When visits were scheduled with intact classes, the field representatives and women scientists conducted their activities much as in the seminars. Because of the presence of males (in many cases more males than females were present) the presentations and discussions tended more toward factual aspects of science and engineering careers than toward the specific opportunities and problems of young women aspiring to those careers.

4. Informal conversations with interested female students. A number of schools arranged to have a period of time set aside for highly motivated female science students to meet with the visitors. Some schools would arrange for 5-10 students to meet together with the field representative and woman scientist; others arranged for individuals to have a short period of time with the visitors. In most cases, the students had already attended a session

earlier in the day and had a good idea of the purposes of the program and the assistance they could expect from the visitors. Therefore, the students and visitors were able to move quickly to specific individual concerns.

5. A meeting with counselors, teachers and other school personnel. The school contact person was asked to schedule a meeting with interested staff, including some of the following: guidance counselors; teachers in the areas of science, math and social science; school librarians; and other interested school, or district personnel. There were three purposes for this meeting: to explain the goals and rationale of the Visiting Women Scientists Program to these staff members and tell them what the visitors were doing in their school; to describe the resource packet of materials which was sent to the school; and to discuss the overall topic of women in science, eliciting any ideas the staff might have as to how the National Science Foundation could assist schools in encouraging more high school females to continue in science and engineering.

Since it was often very difficult for the contact person to arrange an effective meeting because of the operational problems associated with school schedules, 23 of the 110 schools did not schedule a staff meeting. Most of the 87 staff meetings which were held included at least one counselor and at least one science teacher, but many of the meetings did not include any mathematics or social science teachers.

More than 15,000 students were seen in the three formal activities at the 110 schools: 6,739 in large groups (4,195 of whom were tenth grade females); 4,713 in seminars; and 4,251 in classes. At least 1 large group presentation was conducted in 55 of the 110 schools; in all, there were 78 large group meetings, with an average attendance of 86 students per meeting. In the 85 schools which scheduled seminars, there were a total of 213 seminars with an average of 22 students in each. There were 155 presentations to class groups in 61 different schools with an average of 27 students per session.

Across all participating schools there was an average of about 4 formal meetings with students per day. If the counselor/staff meetings are included, the average number of formal meetings per day was nearly 5. These figures do not include informal contacts with individual students, principals and contact persons.

V. EVALUATION OF THE VISITING WOMEN SCIENTISTS PROGRAM

While an important purpose of the Visiting Women Scientists Program was to provide information about women in science careers, it was clear from the outset that a single session with a woman scientist could not possibly fulfill all of the students' information needs. Consequently, encouraging high school females to seek additional information was established as a major goal of the program. There was also interest in obtaining subjective evaluations of the feasibility and effectiveness of the Visiting Women Scientists Program from students, women scientists, and school contact persons.

A number of forms were used to collect data from program participants. Field representatives, women scientists, and school contact persons completed "Record of Visit" forms detailing the events of the visit and their reactions to them. Students were asked to complete brief questionnaires, and those who desired additional information about women in science careers were asked to return a postage-paid postcard indicating the types of information desired. Finally, one month after the visit, the contact person was asked about the use of the resource packet and other evidence of the program's impact. Students in the control schools were also given an opportunity to request additional information by postcard, and contact persons in these schools were asked about the use of the resource packet. The results of the program evaluation are presented below.

1. Student use of postcards to request additional information. Each student who participated in the Visiting Women Scientists Program was given a postcard to use in requesting additional information.[4] The evaluation design included a comparison of the postcard return rate for tenth grade females in experimental and control schools. For this reason, field representatives were asked to record the number of postcards distributed to tenth grade females, and the contact person in each control school received a supply of postcards with instructions to distribute the postcards to all tenth grade females in the school.

---

[4]Students who requested information were mailed a copy of the American College Testing Program's booklet "Women in Science and Technology: Careers for Today and Tomorrow."

The rate of postcard return from tenth grade females in experimental schools was 21 percent. In contrast, the rate of return from tenth grade females in the control schools was 6 percent. This difference between experimental and control schools is statistically significant beyond the .05 level.

2. Specific types of additional information requested. The students could use the postcards to request any or all of 5 types of information. For females, the most frequently requested information was "job opportunities in science and technology for women in the future" (88 percent), followed closely by "what high school courses and college majors are required for science careers" (84 percent). Seventy-two percent of the female students who returned postcards asked for information about "what it's like on the job in a science career," and 68 percent wanted to know more about how educational expenses might be financed. Relatively few (49 percent) of the female students who returned postcards asked for information on "ways women can combine family life and a successful science career."

3. Student and school use of the resource packets. Approximately one month after each visit, the contact person was asked to complete a brief questionnaire about the impact of the Visiting Women Scientists Program and the use of the resource packet. Control schools had also received resource packets, and contact persons in these schools were also asked to complete a brief questionnaire.

Fifty-seven percent of the experimental schools, compared to 38 percent of the control schools, indicated that more than the usual number of female students had sought information about science careers. (Experimental schools were asked about requests during the month since the visit, while control schools were asked about the month since they had received the resource packet.) This difference between experimental and control schools was significant beyond the .05 level, a second indication that the Visiting Women Scientists Program was effective in encouraging female students to seek further information about science careers.

Contact persons in both experimental and control schools were also asked if the resource packet had been used by each of a number of types of people. A majority of both the experimental schools and the control schools (85 percent and 73 percent, respectively) reported that some students had used the resource packet. It appears that sending a resource packet to schools even without

visiting them is an effective means of making information available to students. In contrast, sending schools postcards for students to use in requesting information apparently has little effect unless these schools also receive visits.

Although most experimental and control schools had used the resource packet, very few of the schools had ordered any of the materials listed in the resource packet or annotated bibliography. Only 7 percent of the experimental schools indicated they had already ordered materials, and another 12 percent indicated they planned to order some. These results were not significantly different from those in the control schools where 3 percent had already ordered materials and an additional 13 percent planned to do so.

4. Student evaluations of the Visiting Women Scientists Program. Students who participated in the Visiting Women Scientists Program were asked to complete a brief evaluation questionnaire. The visits were generally well received; 29 percent of the students rated their meeting excellent, 55 percent rated it good, 12 percent fair, and 1 percent poor, with the remaining 3 percent omitting the question. Not surprisingly, a larger percentage of females than males considered the meeting excellent (31 versus 21 percent).

There was no discernible pattern of program ratings based on the characteristics of the women scientists who had participated in the program. When analyzed separately for each of the 40 women scientists, the percent of students rating their meeting excellent varied considerably, from 5 percent to more than 50 percent. (The percent rating their meeting either excellent or good varied from 55 percent to 100 percent, with the majority falling in the 80 to 90 percent range.) However, the group of scientists with the highest ratings and the group with the lowest ratings each included women from a variety of science areas, types of employment, ages, and degree levels. Some of each group were selected from the roster, and some were selected because they had been recommended as particularly effective public speakers who would relate well to high school students.

Students were also asked to rate the program's value in providing particular types of information. As measured by the percent of "very valuable" responses, the Visiting Women Scientists Program was most successful in communicating the importance of keeping one's options open by taking mathematics and science in high school and in encouraging students to seek further information.

5. Interest in future participation in the Visiting Women Scientists Program. When asked if they would be interested in participating in the Visiting Women Scientists Program in the future, all 40 women scientists said yes. Ninety-nine of the 110 visited schools indicated they would like to participate in the future if the program were to be continued, 4 said no, and 7 did not respond.